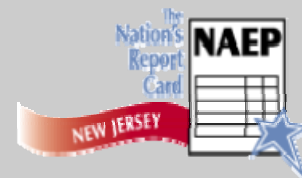


New Jersey NAEP at a Glance

Comparing Science Achievement Levels: NAEP National and New Jersey Results Compared with NJASK 4 and GEPA



Descriptions of NAEP Achievement Levels:

Unlike the New Jersey statewide assessment program, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) uses *four* achievement levels (*i.e.*, *Below Basic*, *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*). The definitions for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) achievement levels are as follows:

- ♦ *Basic* -- partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work.
- ♦ *Proficient* -- solid academic performance. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.
- ♦ *Advanced* -- superior performance.

(Note: NAEP does not provide a definition for or description of student performance at the *Below Basic* achievement level.)

Caveats About Interpreting the Data:

The New Jersey statewide assessment program and the NAEP differ greatly, for example, in terms of their context, purpose, frameworks, item construction, and standard-setting processes. Some important factors to consider are:

- While the New Jersey statewide assessments report student, school, and district results, NAEP does not. NAEP assesses a representative sample of students in New Jersey;
- When determining students results, NAEP uses a complicated data weighting process, and calculates statistics that estimate the student populations; and
- For the science assessment, the three major topic areas assessed by NAEP are earth science, physical science, and life science. Similarly, the New Jersey statewide tests assess six content area: life science, physical science – chemistry, physical science – physics, earth science, astronomy and space science, and environmental studies.

Science: NAEP and New Jersey Achievement Levels:

In New Jersey at the **fourth-grade level**, the percentage of students (32) who performed at or above *Proficient* on the NAEP 2005 was higher than that of the nation's public schools (27). Also in 2005, 68 percent of the New Jersey students scored at or above *Proficient* on the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge at the fourth-grade level (NJASK 4).

In New Jersey at the **eighth-grade level**, the percentage of students (33) who performed at or above *Proficient* on the NAEP 2005 was higher than the nation's public schools (27). Also in 2005, 76.8 percent of the New Jersey students scored at or above *Proficient* on the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA).

GRADE 4				GRADE 8			
PERCENTAGES				PERCENTAGES			
NAEP: Nation's Public Schools Science				NAEP: Nation's Public Schools Science			
Below Basic	At or Above Basic	At or Above Proficient	Advanced	Below Basic	At or Above Basic	At or Above Proficient	Advanced
34	66*	27*	2	43*	57*	27*	3
NAEP: New Jersey Science				NAEP: New Jersey Science			
Below Basic	At or Above Basic	At or Above Proficient	Advanced	Below Basic	At or Above Basic	At or Above Proficient	Advanced
28	72	32	3	35	65	33	4
NJASK 4 Science				GEPA Science			
Partially Proficient	At or Above Proficient		Advanced	Partially Proficient	At or Above Proficient		Advanced
32.0	68.0%		25.2	23.2	76.8		23.5

* Significantly different from the value for New Jersey.